



I. INTRODUCTION

The federal Land and Water Conservation Fund program (LWCF) provides matching funds to states for statewide outdoor recreation planning and for acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Since 1965, approximately \$34 million of LWCF money has been used for projects in Maine (Fig 1). State participation in LWCF requires preparation of a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), and approval of the plan by the National Park Service (NPS).

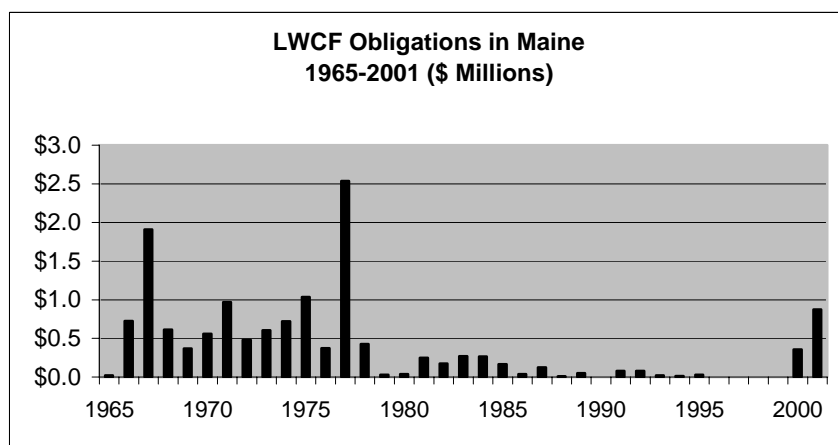


Figure 1

Historically, a new Maine SCORP was prepared at 5-year intervals. Maine's 1993 SCORP was originally approved through December 1998. Because no LWCF funds were allocated to states from 1996 through 1999, the 1993 SCORP was not updated. When stateside LWCF dollars were restored in 2000, the NPS extended the approval first through 2001 and subsequently through October, 2003. The Maine Department of Conservation, Bureau of Parks and Lands (BP&L) is the agency responsible for preparing SCORP.

Prior to 2001, Maine state law required BP&L to periodically report to the governor on the supply of and demand for outdoor recreation facilities and how

these might be met (12 MRSA 1817). Submittal of the SCORP to the Governor accomplished this reporting requirement. In 2001, the Maine Legislature amended this law to require the BP&L director to submit a state comprehensive outdoor recreation plan to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over state parks and public lands matters every 5 years. The amendment specifies that a plan meeting the federal SCORP requirements will also satisfy legislative requirements, further formalizing the role of SCORP in state government.

A. SCORP Planning Requirements

1. Federal Requirements

The LWCF Act requires SCORP to include the following requirements of Chapter 630.1 of the National Park Service LWCF guidelines.

- *name of the state agency having authority to represent and act for the state in dealing with the Secretary of the Interior for purposes of the LWCF Act;*
- *evaluation of the demand for and supply of outdoor recreation resources and facilities in the state;*
- *a program for implementation of the plan;*
- *certification by the Governor that ample opportunity for public participation has taken place in plan development; and*
- *other necessary information as may be determined by the Secretary of the Interior.*

The minimum requirements of the plan are:

1. *inclusion of a description of the process and methodology chosen by the state;*
2. *inclusion of ample opportunity for public participation in the planning process, involving all segments of the state's population;*
3. *comprehensive coverage - it will be considered comprehensive if it:*
 - A. *identifies outdoor recreation issues of statewide importance based upon, but not limited to, input from the public participation program. The plan must also identify those issues that the state will address through the LWCF, and those issues which may be addressed by other means;*
 - B. *evaluates demand or public outdoor recreation preferences, but not necessarily through quantitative statewide surveys or analyses; and*
 - C. *evaluates the supply of outdoor recreation resources and facilities, but not necessarily through quantitative statewide inventories.*
4. *inclusion of an implementation program that identifies the state's strategies, priorities and actions for the obligation of its LWCF apportionment. The implementation program must be of sufficient detail to demonstrate that projects submitted to the NPS for LWCF funding implement the plan; and*
5. *inclusion of a wetlands priority component consistent with Section 303 of the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986. At a minimum the wetlands priority component must:*
 - A. *be consistent with the National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan, prepared by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;*
 - B. *provide evidence of consultation with the state agency responsible for fish and wildlife resources; and*
 - C. *contain a listing of those wetland types which should receive priority for acquisition.*

SCORP may consist of a single document or be comprised of multiple documents, as long as the LWCF planning guidelines in chapter 630.1 are met.

2. Other Requirements

The federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP), funded with federal highway monies and administered by BP&L under agreement with the Maine Department of Transportation, requires that trail projects be identified in, or further a specific goal of, a recreational trails plan, or a SCORP. Trail activities are important component of outdoor recreation in Maine and are specifically addressed in SCORP.

B. Planning Process and Methodology

1. Steering Committee

A Steering Committee of representatives of the following agencies and organizations was created to oversee preparation of SCORP:

- Maine State Planning Office
- Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
- Maine Department of Marine Resources
- Maine Department of Economic and Community Development, Office of Tourism
- Maine Department of Transportation
- Maine Recreation and Park Association
- Maine Department of Conservation, Bureau of Parks and Lands (Chair).

The role of the committee was to assist in the identification of key issues and recommendations; to ensure consistency with state programs and policies related to outdoor recreation; to participate in the public participation process; and to review draft plan documents. The Committee met four times during the preparation of the plan. (Appendix I)

2. Identification of Issues and Actions by Facilitated Groups

The bureau identified five broad issues of statewide importance at the outset of the plan. Each issue area includes a range of topics that staff felt represented current areas of concern in outdoor recreation. Issues and their importance were open to review throughout the preparation of the plan, but were subject to the most focused discussion in a series of five facilitated meetings designed to identify the high priority issues; and to suggest strategies for addressing the issues through the Land and Water Conservation Fund and other programs over the next five years.

Outdoor Recreation Issues of Statewide Importance in Maine
2003-2008

Availability of Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Community Outdoor Recreation Needs & Smart Growth

Recreation/Public Access in the Northern Forest

Trail Recreation

Tourism and Public Recreation Facilities

The Bureau invited individuals and organizational representatives with acknowledged experience or expertise in the different issue areas to participate in the groups as public stakeholders. These participants were provided with background papers on each issue area and subsequently attended a day long facilitated meeting. Over 50 stakeholders attended the meetings in November and December of 2002, along with staff of the Steering Committee agencies that provide recreation facilities and services in Maine. A summary of the group discussions appears under each issue in Chapter IV. Additional information about the groups appears in Appendix II.

3. Inventory of Outdoor Recreation Areas and Facilities

Since 1986, the bureau has maintained a database (PARKALL) of outdoor recreation lands and facilities. Data can be sorted and displayed in report form by town, county, and other aggregations. PARKALL includes over 5,000 records and is the state's only single comprehensive inventory of public and private outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Since 1986, data have been updated as staff resources have permitted. The database has been updated from Rbase to Microsoft Access, and continues to be structurally upgraded to be more efficient and more responsive to user needs.

In preparation for this SCORP, in 2001 and 2002 the bureau asked municipalities, and state and federal agencies to update their data by reviewing and correcting mailed printouts. Nonresponding providers received follow-up telephone calls. As with other inventory efforts, success in updating the data varied with the providers' interest. Resources did not permit an updating of private and non-profit recreation areas and facilities.

4. Assessment of Outdoor Recreation Demand

Demographic information, household and customer surveys, public use and trend data were used to indicate general recreation demand. These references included but are not limited to: the US census; 1991/92 Maine household survey; 1994/1995 Maine household walking and bicycling surveys; the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment; the National Survey of Hunting, Fishing, and Wildlife Associated Recreation; public use data for various parks and recreation areas; and license and registration information.

5. Update of Federal, State and Private Non-Profit Recreation and Conservation Lands

The Bureau has prepared a statewide map of important recreation and conservation lands as part of the SCORP planning process since 1988. The ten-sheet paper map series has served a variety of governmental agencies, organizations, and individuals as the only statewide map record of these significant lands, many purchased with LWCF monies. In this SCORP effort, the bureau has shifted to geographic information systems technology (GIS) by updating the maps digitally and making the GIS files available over the Maine Geographic Information System (MEGIS) website. The bureau will also publish the paper maps in a new, more convenient 20-sheet booklet format that will include descriptive information about the lands that appear on the maps.

6. Wetland Component

The wetland component required by LWCF planning guidelines provides current information on state wetland conservation planning efforts as reflected in the Maine State Wetland Conservation Plan published in 2001.

7. Implementation Program

The implementation program consolidates the actions recommended under the different work elements to address recreation needs and issues, including priorities for Land and Water Conservation Fund expenditures and other actions.

C. Public Participation

Agency and organization representatives and members of the general public were invited to participate in the SCORP planning process by: submitting general comments or concerns about outdoor recreation in Maine to the bureau by email or regular mail; placing their names on electronic and regular mailing lists to receive meeting notices and drafts of the plan; responding to draft plans; providing feedback on facilitated discussion groups on the five issues of statewide importance; and attending public meetings to review the first full draft

of the plan. The bureau issued press releases, mailed notices, and posted information on its website at appropriate times during the process. Public comment on the plan is summarized in Appendix III.

D. Accomplishments since the 1993 SCORP

Many projects, programs, and initiatives have advanced outdoor recreation opportunities in Maine since 1993. Some of the more notable are highlighted below.

1. Federal Land Management Agency Activities

a. National Park Service

Appalachian National Scenic Trail: The National Park Service acquired 3.1 miles of the Appalachian Trail over Saddleback Mountain in Rangeley from the owners of Saddleback Ski Area for \$4 million, ending negotiations that began in 1984. The acquisition includes 1170 fee acres and 324 easement acres and secures what was the largest unprotected parcel on the AT and the last privately owned section of the trail in Maine. Six hundred acres on the southeast side of the mountain will be transferred to the state.

Acadia National Park: The Winter Harbor Naval Station was closed on July 1, 2002 and 97 acres at Schoodic Point returned to the National Park Service. NPS is amending the Acadia National Park General Management Plan to provide direction for visitor use and resource protection of the entire Schoodic District, including alternatives for a Schoodic Education and Research Center (SERC) that make use of former navy buildings and infrastructure.

The Island Explorer bus system was initiated in 1999 to address traffic congestion and air pollution in and around Acadia National Park. The system offers fare-free travel on propane-powered vehicles between lodgings and destinations in Acadia National Park and neighboring villages. Bus use in 2002 totaled 281,142 riders, a 107% increase over the first year of service, and service will be expanded in 2003. The system is supported by the National Park Service (including Acadia entrance fees), area towns, the US DOT, Maine DOT, L.L. Bean, local businesses, and Friends of Acadia.

b. US Forest Service

White Mountain National Forest: The White Mountain National Forest Parking Pass Program, one of several Recreation Fee Demonstration programs authorized by Congress in 1996, charges for parking in designated areas (including sites in Maine), and uses fees collected to maintain and enhance the locations requiring a pass. Passes range in price from \$3/day/person to \$25/year/household and can be purchased both on and off-site. From 1997 through 2001, the program generated over \$2 million and supported trail, campsite, picnic area,

and other facility construction, improvement, and maintenance; backcountry and wilderness patrols; and visitor information and education programs. The program has been extended through 2004.

The Forest Plan for the White Mountain National Forest, approved in 1986, is being revised and completion is expected by December 2004. Current discussions focus on alternative designations for timber, vegetation, wildlife habitat, and recreation management areas; timber harvest and regeneration levels; and management of increasing recreational use, motorized trail use, and wilderness designation and management.

c. US Fish and Wildlife Service

National Wildlife Refuges: Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge was expanded to over 16,000 acres by the acquisition of 6,200 acres in partnership with the Trust for Public Lands and Hancock Timber Resources Group, protecting critical wetlands, linking other holdings, and improving public access. Aroostook National Wildlife Refuge was designated in 1998 on land formerly part of Loring Air Force Base, which closed in 1994. The 4655-acre refuge is located in Limestone and Caswell. As part of the Winter Harbor Naval Station closure, over 400 acres of wetland will become part of Petit Manan National Wildlife Refuge.

Gulf of Maine Coastal Program: The USFWS Gulf of Maine Coastal Program was established in 1991 as one of 16 USFWS Coastal Program areas. The Gulf of Maine Coastal Program participated in fee and easement acquisitions to protect more than 69,000 acres of high value fish and wildlife habitat, including 44 nesting islands, 100 coastal wetlands and associated uplands, and 42 areas with habitat adjacent to sea run fish rivers; partnered in the acquisition of a 762,202 acre no-development easement in the northern forest, restored more than 4,500 acres of habitat for migratory birds, including 65 coastal wetlands, 4 grasslands, and 13 nesting islands; completed 56 river restoration projects to benefit sea run fish -- including 10 dam removals and installation or repair of 12 fish passage facilities; and leveraged more than \$92 million of habitat protection and restoration funding.

2. Federal Grants to Maine for Recreation Related Land Acquisition and Development

a. Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

The Bureau of Parks and Lands administers LWCF monies in Maine. The state received \$4,671,796 in LWCF project funds between 1993 and 2002, including \$2,671,796 in stateside funds, and a \$2 million special appropriation in 2001 for land acquisition in the West Branch (Penobscot River) Project. There was no LWCF funding for states from 1996 through 1999.

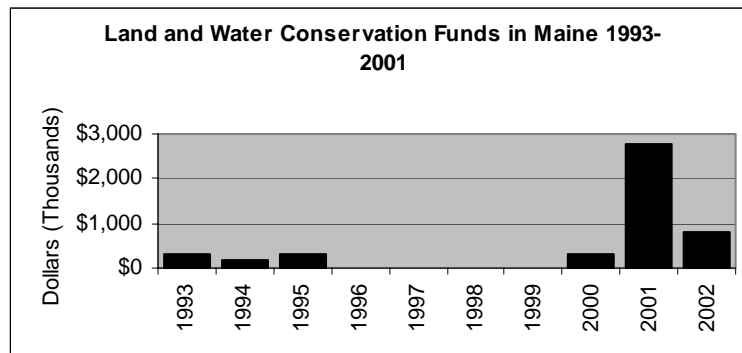


Figure 2

b. Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

The Bureau of Parks and Lands is the Recreational Trails Program administrator in Maine. RTP provides federal highway funds for recreational trail development, improvement, and maintenance. From 1993 through 2001 the RTP funded projects in Maine totaling \$ 2,318,431. Program funds increased substantially in 1999, rising from nearly \$89,000 in 1998 to over \$650,000 in 1999.

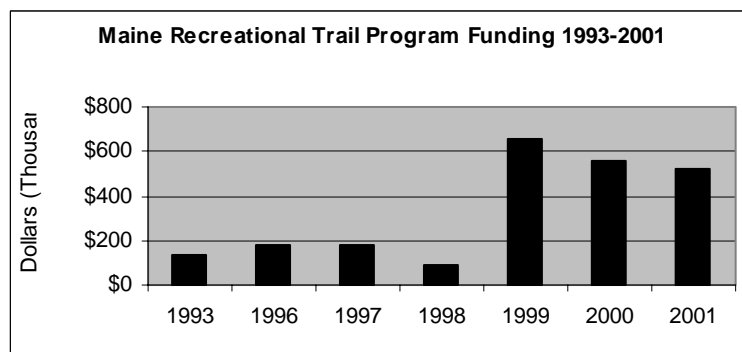


Figure 3

c. Forest Legacy Program (FLP)

The Forest Legacy Program was established in 1990 as a partnership between participating states and the USDA Forest Service to identify and protect environmentally important forests from conversion to non-forest uses, primarily through acquisition of conservation easements. The Maine Forest Service in the Department of Conservation administers the state program with the following goals: maintain traditional forest uses; protect water quality; maintain productive forests; provide public recreation opportunities; and prevent development along pristine lakes, ponds, and streams. As of June 2003, completed fee and easement acquisitions in Maine totaled 59,465 acres with an expenditure of \$9,663,000 Forest Legacy dollars.

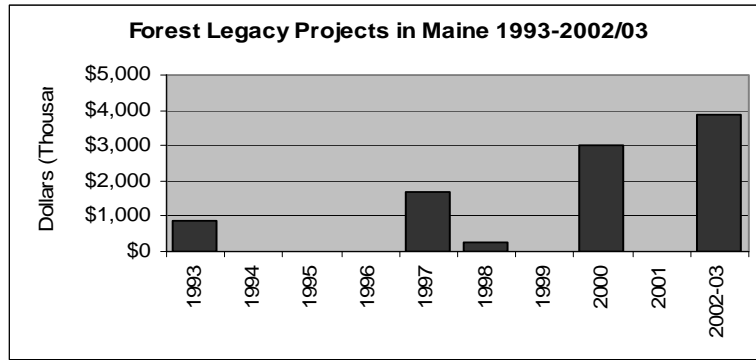


Figure 4

3. Maine State Agency Activities

a. Maine Department of Conservation (MDOC)

Consolidation of Bureaus of Parks and Lands: Responding to state government budget shortfalls, the Bureau of Parks and Recreation (BPR) and the Bureau of Public Lands (BPL) were consolidated in 1995 into the Bureau of Parks and Lands (BP&L). Central operations and maintenance and five regional administrative offices of the state park and historic site system were eliminated and the functions consolidated into two regional offices. Design, permitting, and construction supervision capabilities in the boating facilities division were shifted to private contractors. A total of 34.5 staff positions were eliminated.

Bureau of Parks and Lands Activities

State Parks & Historic Sites Division

- Received 2.5 million visits to Maine state parks and historic sites in 2001. Day use visits increased by 33% and camping visits by 18% between 1993 and 2002.
- Upgraded state park campsite reservation system (now online), and reservations increased from 4498 to 11,398 between 1993 and 2002.
- Expended \$5.1 million of revenues from the sale of motor vehicle conservation registrations (Loon license plate) since 1998 for maintenance and improvements at state parks and historic sites. The Legislature approved the special registration in 1993 with revenues to support wildlife protection and state parks.
- Secured a lease with Poland Spring Bottling Company in 1999 for groundwater from wells at Range Pond State Park. Since 2001, expended \$1.5 million in lease revenues for state park and historic site operations and maintenance.
- Prepared Maine State Parks and Historic Sites ADA/Accessibility Study (1996) and made substantial progress on improvements with funds from a 1996 bond issue for ADA improvements at state facilities and other funds made available for renovations and capital improvements.

- Made water and sewer system, comfort station, and bath house improvements at 11 state parks and historic sites and one regional park with funds from a 1993 bond issue for water quality improvements at state facilities.
- Established and supported new “friends” groups at Fort Edgecomb, Fort Knox, Eagle Island, and the Allagash Wilderness Waterway. Partnered with “friends” groups to build visitor center at Fort Knox; restore fort house at Colonial Pemaquid, stabilize historic locomotive in the Allagash Wilderness Waterway.
- Transferred title or management for a number of properties to municipalities or other local entities, including Woodbury Pond, Hermon Pond, Lake Pennesseewassee, and “Montpelier,” the Knox Mansion.
- Continued to support work of the St Croix International Waterway Commission and has contracted with the Commission to manage recreational use of the corridor in the US.

Reserved and Nonreserved Lands Division

- Received legislative authorization to designate Ecological Reserves on state-owned land totaling 69,000 acres in 13 locations. Designated 2 additional reserves (appx. 8233 acres) on new lands at Mount Abraham and Big Spencer Mountain.
- Obtained third-party forest certifications under both the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and the Forest Stewardship Council programs for 485,000 acres.
- Created 167 miles of shared use roads on Public Reserved Lands for ATVs, bicycles, and horses.
- Established hiking trails at Donnell Pond, Cutler Coast, Deboullie, and Nahmakanta Public Reserved Lands units, and partnered with others to establish the Grafton Loop Trail on public and private lands. Grafton and Nahmakanta trails provide backpacking alternatives to the Appalachian Trail.
- Rehabilitated trails at Big Moose Mountain (to nation’s oldest fire tower) and Bald Mountain in Rangeley.
- Upgraded portage trail and campsites at Holeb for the Moose River “Bow Trip” canoe route.
- Supported partnerships with the Damariscotta River Association and the Maine Island Trail Association for management of public lands and coastal islands.
- Partnered with Baxter State Park and Acadia National Park to produce Leave No Trace training video.
- Assisted efforts to establish the Northern Forest Canoe Trail and the Eastern Maine Canoe Trail.
- Accomplished sustainable timber harvest of 561,000 cords from 1993-2002, about 50% of the maximum sustainable harvest level for the ten-year period.

Boating Facilities Division

- From 1993 through 2002 developed or assisted development of 14 Department of Conservation-operated and 67 locally-operated boat launching facilities.

Provided match for 46 boat launching facilities developed by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

- Developed the Strategic Plan for Providing Public Access to Maine Waters for Boating and Fishing (1995) and 2001 plan update in cooperation with IF&W
- Continued to place and maintain navigational aids on 21 heavily-used lakes, and worked with groups or municipalities to mark another 19 lakes.
- Participated in “Gas Tax Equity” review resulting in increased funding.

Off Road Vehicle Division

- From 1992-93 to 2002-03, the Snowmobile Trail Fund provided over \$16 million to clubs and towns to develop and maintain snowmobile trails. Annual grants increased from 131 to 373 projects per year, and trail miles maintained increased from 10,497 to 12,843 miles per year.
- Administered new funds for the purchase of trail grooming equipment generated from one-time special appropriation and 2001 increase in snowmobile registration fees. By the end of 2002, awarded 92 equipment grants totaling \$1.9 million.
- From 1997 to 2002, the ATV Management Fund provided over \$ 500,000 to clubs and towns to develop and maintain ATV trails. Annual grants increased from 12 to 56 projects per year, and local trail miles maintained increased from 440 to 2182 miles per year. Provided over \$214,000 to support and expand state-maintained ATV trails, which increased from 85 miles in 1985 to 164 miles in 2002.
- Acquired fee or easement interest in 95.6 miles of abandoned railroad corridor. Bureau rail corridors acquired or leased for multiple use trails now totals 200 miles.
- Supported partnerships with Fort Kent, St John, St Francis, Washburn, Caribou, Jay, Farmington, and Wilton to manage multiple use rail trails.
- Participated in highway gas tax review that resulted in \$3M recreational access bond, including four large snowmobile trail bridge projects and \$250K increase in annual gas tax revenues to the program

Engineering and Realty Division

- Land acquisition and facility development at Lake George Regional Park
- Fort Knox roof drainage, safety improvements, and new maintenance shop.
- Lake St. George State Park: day-use comfort station, new water and sanitary systems.
- Trestle upgrade on Bangor and Aroostook rail corridor trail.
- New group pavilion/nature education center, two playgrounds, and wheelchair ramp for disabled swimmers at Range Ponds State Park.
- New visitor center at Quoddy Head State Park
- Aroostook State Park comfort station, underground power and cook shelter.
- New comfort stations at Camden Hills (3), Mt. Blue, and Lamoine State Parks.
- Replaced pier at Eagle Island.

Planning and Acquisition Division

- Completed management plans for Cutler Coast (1993), Nahmakanta (1995), Moosehead (1997), and the Allagash Wilderness Waterway (1999); and a draft recreation management plan for state-owned coastal islands on the Maine Island Trail.
- Revised and updated the Integrated Resource Policy (1999) that guides land management on Reserved and Nonreserved lands, Parks, and Historic Sites.
- Conducted customer satisfaction surveys for bureau lands and programs, 1996-2000.
- Developed pilot project to measure public use on Public Reserved and nonreserved lands.
- Added 65,000 acres to the land base through fee and conservation easement purchases and land trades. Partnered with NGOs and landowners to expand public access to lands.
- Provided documentation for certification of forest management activities on Public Reserved and nonreserved lands and for designation of ecological reserves on Public Reserved lands.
- Prepared a number of studies: Maine Outdoor Recreation Activity Participation and Trends (1994); 1994/95 Walking and Running Survey of Household Residents and 1994/95 Bicycling Survey of Household Residents for the MAINEDOT (1995); Natural Resource Areas in State Parks, State Historic Sites and Other Park and Recreation Parcels Managed by the Bureau of Parks and Lands (1998); Allagash Wilderness Waterway Campsite and Campsite Cell Occupancy (1999); Monitoring the Condition of Campsites in the Allagash Wilderness Waterway (2002)
- Produced the Maine Trails Manual, a guide for volunteers and field personnel on trail construction and maintenance (2001)
- Updated Maine Outdoor Recreation Areas and Facilities Inventory database (PARKALL) for federal, state, and municipal facilities. Revised and updated database structure.

Submerged Land and Coastal Island Registry

- Administered 1,600 leases/ easements for submerged lands
- Reviewed approximately 100 new proposals annually
- Completed 850 coastal structure registrations
- Established Shore and Harbor Management grant program for waterfront planning and improving public access
- Established citizen advisory board (1997) to assist in the management of submerged lands.
- Authorized the removal of two abandoned fishing trawlers from near-shore coastal waters.
- Established a sunken log salvage program authorizing the recovery of marketable logs from submerged lands on great ponds.

Community Recreation and Grants Division

- Administered 69 stateside Land & Water Conservation Fund grants totaling over \$4.6 million from 1993 through 2002. Stateside funds were distributed about equally between state and local projects, with the largest share of the funds devoted to facility development and renovations.

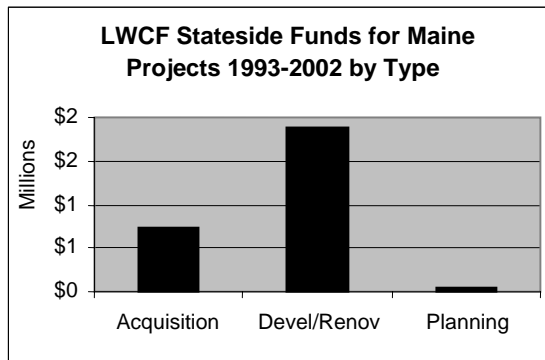


Figure 5

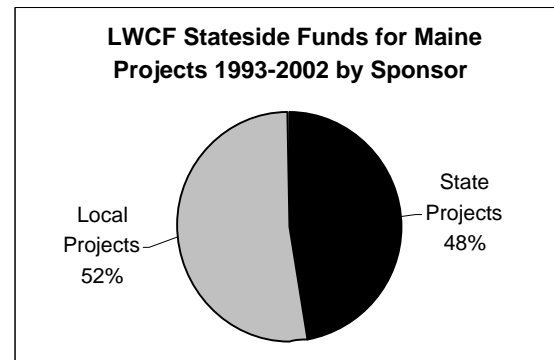


Figure 6

- Administered special \$2 million LWCF appropriation for West Branch Project acquisition in 2001.
- Administered 139 Recreational Trail Program grants totaling over \$2.3 million from 1993 through 2001. 73% of RTP funds were distributed to towns, clubs, and other local groups, and 23% of the funds were for state projects. Most projects were for trail development and improvement.

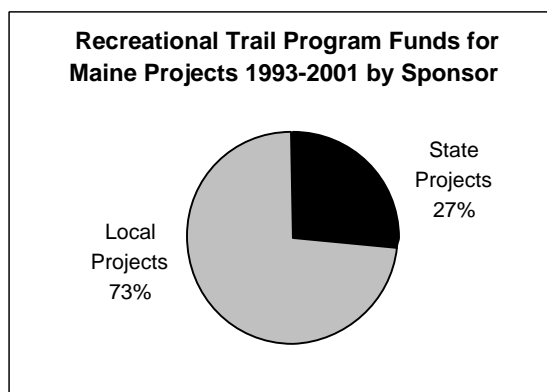


Figure 7

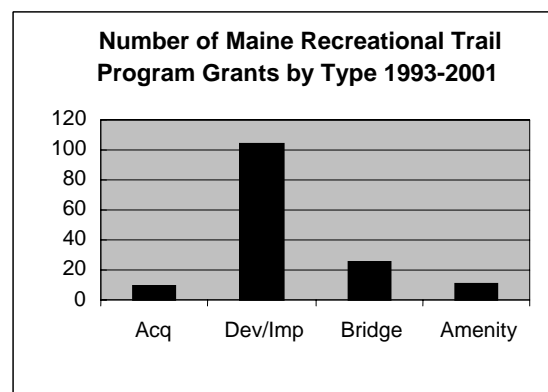


Figure 8

- Conducted the first Maine State Trails Conference, a two-day workshop devoted to issues and programs of importance to trail managers, trail user groups, trail developers, land owners, and government personnel.

b. State Planning Office (SPO)

Land for Maine's Future Program (LMF): Following expenditure of the original \$35 million bond, the Land for Maine's Future Fund received a supplemental state General Fund appropriation of \$3 million in 1998, and a second public bond

for \$50 million was approved by voters in 1999. Approximately two-thirds of the \$50 million is now committed for ongoing land protection projects.

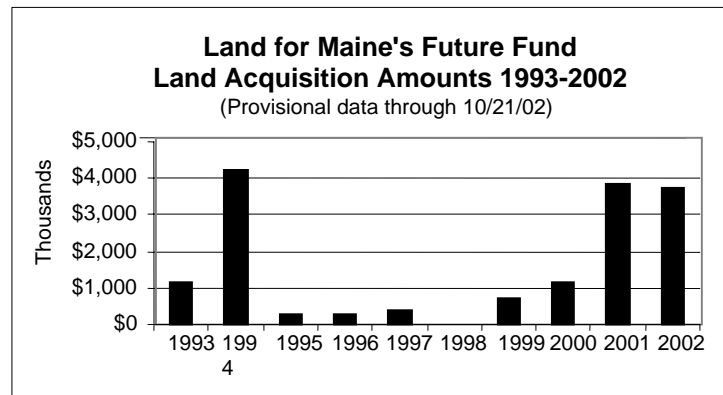


Figure 9

Since 1993, the LMF program has supported the acquisition of over 60,000 acres, closely divided among fee and easement lands that include public access for recreational use. Over 97% of the interests acquired are administered by state agencies and over 80% by the Department of Conservation.

Table 1 LMF Acres Acquired by Managing Agency		
Managing Agency	Acres	
	# Acres	% of Acres
Atlantic Salmon Com	5,070	8.4%
Inland Fish & Wildlife	4,804	8.0%
Agriculture	247	0.4%
Conservation	50,299	83.2%
Total	60,421	100.0%
Project Agt Acres	1,395	2.3%

Table 2 LMF Acres Acquired by Type of Interest		
Interest	Acres	
	# of Acres	% of Acres
Fee	31,858	52.7%
Easement	28,564	47.3%
Total	60,422	100.0%

The Legislature amended the program in 1999 to require a \$25 million match for the \$50 million in bond funds; to commit 10% of the bond funds to public water access and up to 10% to farmland protection; to make sites of local and regional significance eligible projects, and municipalities and nonprofit organizations eligible title holders of land, subject to project agreements to ensure property use for stated purposes; and to require county commissioner approval when a proposed acquisition exceeds 1% of the state valuation within the county.

Because of the increasing role of conservation easements in protecting large areas of working forest, the Land for Maine's Future Board adopted principles and detailed guidelines for such easements that it might fund. The guidelines prohibit or strictly limit additional non-forestry and non-recreation related development, subdivision, and non-forestry commercial uses; and require

continuation of traditional recreational access and uses such as fishing, hiking, hunting, and nature observation.

The Land Acquisition Priorities Advisory Committee (LAPAC): LAPAC was created by the Governor in 1996 to update priorities for future public land acquisitions in Maine by LMF and other programs. Priorities included five “Focus Areas:” Access to Water; Southern Maine Conservation Lands; Ecological Reserves; River Systems; and Undeveloped Coastline. Also noted were “Other Important Priorities:” Northern Forest Conservation Lands; Municipal/Urban Open Space; Trail Systems; Farm Land; Regional Parks; Additions and Access to Existing Public Lands; Mineral Collecting Sites; Islands; and Significant Mountains. These priorities have been incorporated into the LMF project selection process and the Bureau of Parks and Lands land acquisition policy.

Growth Management and Smart Growth: The Growth Management Program underwent a number of changes during the 1990s. The program retains the essential functions of supporting efforts by municipalities to develop comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, and capital investment strategies that meet 10 state goals and 9 coastal policies addressing development and resource protection. The context of the program, however, has shifted to preventing sprawl and achieving patterns of growth that are both livable and environmentally and economically affordable, i.e., Smart Growth.

SPO has overseen a number of initiatives to examine the causes and effects of sprawl in Maine and to revise state policies and practices that inadvertently supported this type of development. These initiatives call for protecting the state’s natural resource base and rural landscape; preserving open spaces for important wildlife, natural communities, water quality protection, and outdoor recreation; and public investments that contribute to viable communities.

Maine Coastal Program: SPO’s Maine Coastal Program and the Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) prepared Coastal Water Access Priority Areas for Boating and Fishing in 2000 for use by the Land for Maine’s Future Program, the Bureau of Parks and Lands’ Boating Facilities Program, the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife’s boat access program, and the Department of Transportation’s Small Harbor Improvement Program and Public and Recreational Access Committee. The report supplements the Strategic Plan for Providing Public Access to Maine Waters for Boating and Fishing (1995, updated in 2001) developed by the Departments of Conservation and Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IF&W) to identify priority lakes, ponds, and rivers in need of public access. A comparable list did not exist for coastal waters.

The Maine Coastal Program’s Right-of-Way Discovery Grant Program helps communities find and assert public rights-of-way to the shore, which may be lost by the passing of generations and changing land ownership patterns. These routes provide access for residents and visitors for fishing, clamming, worming, boating, swimming, and exploring. The program awards small research

grants of approximately \$1,000 to municipalities or local land trusts. From 1994 to 2003, 51 grants totaling \$72,200 were awarded to 31 towns from Kittery to Machiasport.

Beginning in 2002, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provided funding to coastal states to improve water quality testing at saltwater beaches and to notify the public when problems arise. The EPA awarded funds to the Maine Coastal Program to develop water quality testing methods, a public notification system, and education and outreach materials. Initially launched at a few of Maine's coastal beaches, including state park beaches, the Coastal Swim Beach Monitoring Program will be expanded to include all coastal swim beaches where visitor numbers and local conditions warrant a testing program; and where there are interested participants.

Maine State Wetland Conservation Plan: In 1994, SPO received a wetland planning grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency to prepare a state wetland conservation plan in cooperation with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) that would explore wetland regulation issues of concern at the time and consider broader wetland policy and program opportunities, including acquisition. The resultant Maine State Wetlands Conservation Plan (2001) provides goals and recommendations to achieve wetland conservation, which must be reviewed annually by a Wetlands Interagency Team (WIT) working with federal partners. The plan is discussed further in Chapter V, Wetland Component.

c. Department of Transportation (MaineDOT)

Explore Maine: In 1996, MaineDOT proposed a multimodal approach to moving people that is unique among rural state transportation agencies. Explore Maine is a visitor-oriented strategic plan that proposes to develop an integrated system of passenger transportation options that allows visitors and residents to travel to, from, and throughout Maine without the personal automobile for some or all of their trips. The system includes air, rail, bus, ferry, highway, and trail components and connects major coastal, urban, and inland destinations. Important elements in the system that have been completed include rail service to Boston, high speed ferry service to Nova Scotia, the Island Explorer buses at Acadia National Park, a number of bicycle projects, and improved traveler information.

Transportation Enhancement (TE): The Transportation Enhancement Program is a federal/municipal match program that in Maine supports projects related to MaineDOT's passenger transportation, pedestrian & bicycle, environmental mitigation, and downtown revitalization initiatives to create enhanced transportation systems focused on the community. Projects include pedestrian and bicycle facilities and education; conversion of abandoned railway corridors to trails; landscaping and scenic beautification; scenic and historic highways; historic preservation; and wildlife protection. From 1992-93 to 2000-

01 Maine received \$40,939,362 for these programs (excluding the Recreational Trails Program.)

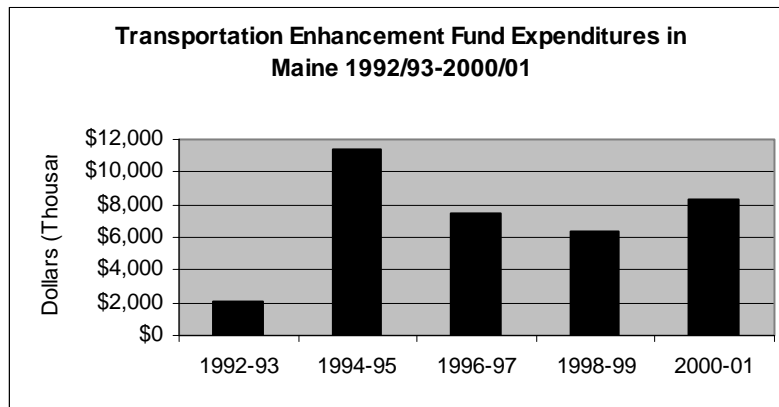


Figure 10

Bicycle/Pedestrian Program: MaineDOT has undertaken numerous projects to enhance bicycle and foot travel around the state: making low cost improvements to State roads to enhance bicycle safety and access (Spot ME, in cooperation with the Bicycle Coalition of Maine); expanding and paving road shoulders; developing and improving sidewalks; developing and improving connections to destinations like schools and shopping areas; and creating bicycle travel lanes; brokering bicycle parking and storage equipment for municipalities, employers, and organizations at discounted prices based on volume orders; producing a Bicycle Map of Maine, and in cooperation with the Maine Office of Tourism, producing Bike Tours in Maine, 25 bicycle-friendly routes with locations in each of Maine's 8 tourism regions, with maps, transportation, accommodation, and service information available on the "Explore Maine by Bike" website.

MaineDOT is promoting the development of three major trails on or near discontinued rail lines in Maine, which will connect with the *Explore Maine* transportation network. These trails are expected to attract visitors to underutilized regions of Maine as well as onto alternative transportation modes:

- the Mountain Division between Fryeburg and Portland in Cumberland and York Counties;
- the Eastern Trail, along much of the old Eastern Railroad, from Kittery to South Portland in Cumberland and York Counties; and
- the Downeast Trail, roughly paralleling the Calais Branch rail line, from Brewer to Calais in Washington and Hancock Counties.

In addition, MaineDOT has mapped an on-road bicycle route for the East Coast Greenway covering 618 miles from Kittery to Calais as Maine's portion of the greenway, which extends over 2,600 miles from Key West, Florida to Calais.

Other trail acquisition and/or development projects include the Androscoggin River Bicycle Path in Brunswick; the Riverfront Park Bikeway in Lewiston; Kennebec River Rail Trail in Augusta/Hallowell; the St John Valley Heritage Trail in Ft Kent, St John, and St Francis; a Bike/Ped Pathway in Bethel; the Mountain Connector Trail in Southwest Harbor; the Carrabassett Stream Trail

in Carabasset Valley; a bike path extension to a YMCA and school in Old Town/Orono; and portions of the South Portland Greenbelt.

MaineDOT has sponsored the preparation of community, area, and regional bicycle plans; the implementation of bicycle safety education programs; a number of bicycle conferences; and statewide studies, including *Bicycle Tourism in Maine: Economic Impacts and Marketing Recommendations and Maine Safe Ways to School 2001-2003.*

Scenic Byways: Under the National Scenic Byways Program certain roads are recognized as National Scenic Byways or All-American Roads based on their intrinsic natural or cultural qualities: Exceptional All-American Roads and regionally significant National Scenic Byways are collectively promoted as America's Byways - distinctive routes that tell the story of America. Four routes have been designated in Maine and are being improved for visitor use: the Acadia Byway an All American Road (Route 3, 40 miles), and three National Scenic Byways – the Old Canada Road Scenic Byway (Route 201, 78 Miles), the Rangeley Lakes Scenic Byway (Routes 4 and 17, 35.6 miles), and the Schoodic Scenic Byway (Rtes 1 and 186, 29 miles).

Public and Recreational Access Committee: In 2001, Maine voters endorsed a \$2.9 million bond to fund snowmobile crossings and boating and fishing access improvements on certain highway bridges designated as high priority sites by the Departments of Conservation, Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, and Marine Resources. To provide for implementation of the bond and for ongoing coordination of transportation and water access and water crossing projects, the four departments formed a Public and Recreational Access Committee chaired by MaineDOT to review MaineDOT project plans for public access opportunities and specifications. Access improvements of interest include: safe parking near bridges; safe fishing from bridges; safe riverbank access for fishing; safe carry-in access for canoes and kayaks; safe trailered boat launching; and safe snowmobiling across bridges. Constituent groups who also provide input to the committee include: Sportsman's Alliance of Maine, Trout Unlimited, Coastal Conservation Association of Maine, the Maine Snowmobile Association, and the Maine Municipal Association.

d. Maine Office of Tourism

Maine expanded its commitment to tourism significantly in the 1990s. The tourism marketing budget grew from \$1.5 million to more than \$4.6 million annually. In 2003, a newly legislated tax initiative – the Tourism Promotion Marketing Fund – is expected to raise the budget to nearly \$7 million a year. The efforts of Maine's Office of Tourism are now directed by strategic marketing plans that guide both state and industry efforts. Results of marketing efforts are measured annually, and provide data about Maine visitors that has been unavailable to state planners.

The Office oversees statewide marketing efforts and supports the development of effective programs in the state's eight tourism regions through

the Maine Tourism Marketing Partnership Program (MTMPP). The primary objective of the MTMPP is to stimulate and expand the travel industry within the tourism regions while strengthening the State's image by coordinating the promotional efforts of the private sector with those of the Office of Tourism. A second objective is to support major special events that attract visitors to the state and impact two or more regions. Eligible projects include market research, advertising, fulfillment, brochures, trade and consumer shows, familiarization tours, hospitality training, and multi-region promotions and partnerships.

Given the importance of Maine's natural and cultural resources to both Maine visitors and residents, the office and Maine's Tourism Commission have recently begun working with agencies to identify important nature-based tourism resources and contributing ideas on their conservation and management that will sustain the resource and provide economic benefit.

e. Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (DIFW)

The Department managed 51 Wildlife Management Areas totaling 77,243 acres for hunting, fishing, trapping, boating, and wildlife watching, as well as nine fish hatcheries that rear brook, brown and lake trout, landlocked salmon, and splake. The Department's boating program developed 46 boating facilities from 1993 through 2002, and oversees a total of 96 boating facilities statewide. DIFW participated in the highway gas tax review that resulted in a \$2.9 million recreational and water access bond.

The Department provides wildlife education at the Maine Wildlife Park in Gray and the Steve Powell Wildlife Management Area in Richmond and offers programs for teachers and students through Project WILD. The Department offers hunting, trapping, boating, and off-road recreational vehicle safety courses, and sponsors participation in Maine Conservation Camp, Maine Youth Field Days, Becoming an Outdoors Woman in Maine, and HOOKED ON FISHING-NOT ON DRUGS

The Maine Warden Service enforces laws and rules pertaining to the management and protection of inland fisheries and wildlife and to the registration and operation of snowmobiles, watercraft and all-terrain vehicles, and is the state's lead agency for landowner relations and search and rescue.

Table 3 Licenses and Registrations Issued by the Maine Dept of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife 1993-2000					
Year	Boating Reg	ATV Reg	Snowmo Reg	Fishing Lic	Hunting Lic
1993	113590	21447	64985	304164	223302
1994	115123	22390	70043	284226	218319
1995	115895	23857	71306	277975	213129
1996	127905	24324	0	267158	210183
1997	133529	27270	0	261753	209021
1998	126665	28834	81936	270084	209992
1999	129226	33854	86501	273673	213752
2000	128601	40279	97835	273880	213984

Source: Maine Dept Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

f. Maine Department of Marine Resources

The Department of Marine Resources is responsible for the conservation and development of Marine and estuarine resources. DMR sponsors and conducts scientific research; promotes and develops Maine coastal fishing industries; coordinates with local, state and federal officials concerning activities in coastal waters; administers and enforces laws and regulations related to these tasks, including marine fisheries laws, boating registration and safety laws; and it conducts search and rescue operations on coastal waters.

The number of marine recreational fishermen is increasing as a result of increases in population size of striped bass and other species, and DMR's efforts to provide information on saltwater fishing and involvement with the marine recreational fishing community. In 1996, a Maine Recreational Marine Fisheries Advisory Council was created to advise the department on issues pertaining to recreational marine fisheries including the needs and priorities of the recreational sector, conservation measures, improvement of communications between recreational and commercial fisheries interests, and programs to enhance the status of marine recreational species. The demands of marine recreational fishing require progress in areas of public access, resource enhancement, and education.

DMR and SPO (Coastal Program) prepared Coastal Water Access Priority Areas for Boating and Fishing in 2000 for use by state agencies whose programs help provide public access to water: Land for Maine's Future Program; Parks and Lands' and Inland Fisheries and Wildlife boating programs; Transportation's Small Harbor Improvement Program and Public and Recreational Access Committee. The report supplements the Strategic Plan for Providing Public Access to Maine Waters for Boating and Fishing (1995, updated in 2001), which was lacking a coastal component. DMR also participated in the highway gas tax review that resulted in a \$2.9 million recreational and water access bond.

With over 3,500 miles of coastline and approximately 2,800 square miles of state waters, the commercial and recreational boaters in Maine waters are numerous. During the summer months, the coastal bays and estuaries see thousands of boaters who are required to have standard safety measures aboard. DMR's marine patrol works with the US Coast Guard to assure safe boating practices in the congested summer season and the cold winter months.

In 1998, the Edwards Dam on the Kennebec River in Augusta was removed, permitting anadromous fish to migrate an additional 17 miles upstream to the lower Sebasticook River. DMR's Stock Enhancement Division is currently working to restore permanent upstream and downstream fish passage on the Sebasticook. Full restoration of the river will eventually provide access to approximately 19,000 surface acres of lake habitat and potential production of 4.5 million alewives. American shad spawning and nursery habitat area (~1,400 acres) could provide a production potential of about 133,000 adult shad in the Sebasticook River. The Division also assists the Atlantic Salmon Authority in the management and restoration of Atlantic salmon to Maine rivers, currently focusing on the Kennebec and Androscoggin Rivers

The Marine Resources Aquarium was constructed along with the state's new fisheries research station in West Boothbay Harbor between 1993 and 1997. This public DMR facility provides marine educational opportunities to Maine schools and visitors. Exhibits and programs teach about the resources in the Gulf of Maine through live exhibits and educational presentations. Over 33,000 people visited the aquarium in 1998-99. The Burnt Island Light House in Boothbay Harbor, built in 1821, was transferred to DMR in 1998 as part of the Maine Lights Program, and is being restored for operation as another marine education facility.

3. Private Sector Activities

A principal effort of the private sector over the last decade has been the initiatives of private nonprofit conservation organizations in identifying lands with significant conservation and recreation values, many in the Northern Forest, and acquiring or facilitating the acquisition of fee or easement interests in these lands. By the late 1990s, for example, the Nature Conservancy had identified five subsections of the Northern Appalachian/Boreal Forest Ecoregion in Maine in which to focus its efforts to create functional conservation areas: the St John Upland; the White Mountains; the Central Maine Embayment; Coastal Maine; and the Aroostook-New Brunswick area. Similarly, working with resource inventories and mapping provided by members like the Maine Audubon Society and the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Northern Forest Alliance has identified five "wildlands" in Maine that merit special protection because of low road density, number and size of lakes, rivers, wetlands, mountains, and ecosystem types; distribution of rare plants, animals, and natural communities; and prominent recreational features: the Androscoggin Headwaters; the Western Mountains; the St John River Valley; Greater Baxter State Park; and the Down East Lakes.

The rapidly changing ownership of forest lands in the 1990's and early 2000's, and the interest of new landowners in selling fee or easement interests in some of these lands, provided the conditions for an unprecedented effort by conservation organizations to focus their efforts on these priority areas and other important lands. Acting singly, jointly, and in partnership with state and federal agencies, the larger organizations have provided resources for assessments, appraisals, negotiations, and closings, as well as for acquisition and management. They act as facilitators, brokers, titleholders, and/or managers depending on organization mission and the land values involved. In addition to the Nature Conservancy, the New England Forestry Foundation, the Forest Society of Maine, the Trust for Public Land, and the Appalachian Mountain Club, have played key roles in recent acquisition efforts.

Examples of these acquisitions include: Pierce Pond Easement (9,743 acres); Mount Abraham Ecological Reserve (4,033 acres); St John Valley Acquisition (185,000 acres); Pingree Forest Easement (762,192 acres); Katahdin Forest (241,100 acres); Spednik Lake-St Croix River Conservation Corridor

(3,019 acres; Big Spencer Mountain and Moosehead Shoreline-West Branch Phase I (4,800 acres); Mount Blue/Tumbledown (19,073 acres); and Leavitt Plantation (8,600 acres). Smaller conservation organizations, primarily regional and local land trusts, have joined these efforts or are following parallel strategies at the regional and local levels. The Kennebec Highlands Project in central Maine is a noteworthy example.

In terms of developed recreation opportunities provided by the private sector, two items deserve note here and are summarized in Chapter II, Supply of Outdoor Recreation Areas and Facilities. First, the Maine Winter Sports Center, established in 1999 with a grant from the Libra Foundation, is successfully reestablishing winter skiing at the community level in Aroostook County, and is about to expand this model to western Maine with another Libra grant to acquire and develop the Black Mountain Ski Area in Rumford. The Center operates world class biathlon and cross country facilities in Aroostook County that will host the World Biathlon Cup in 2004 and 2006 and the World Junior Biathlon. Second, there has been significant investment in golf courses in Maine over the past decade both to improve and expand existing facilities and to create about 20 new courses.